

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-3, 5-14, 17-23, 25, and 27-38 remain in this application. Claims 4, 15, 16, 21, 24, 26 have been canceled. Claims 17, 18, 19, 27, and 33 were amended herein. The Office Action acknowledged that claims 1-3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12-14, 17, 18, 21, 23, 25, 29-31, and 34-38 are directed to allowable subject matter.

Claims 17 and 18 have been rewritten in independent form and are now in form for allowance.

Claim 21, although allowed, has been cancelled to prevent duplication of claim 20. The recitations previously found in claim 21 are now found in claim 19, and in claims 20 and 22 by virtue of their dependence on claim 19. Similarly, claims 27 and 33 have been amended to include the recitations of claim 21, and the recitations of claim 21 are also found in claim 28 by virtue of its dependence on claim 27. As such, claims 19, 20, 22, 27, 28, and 33 now include the recitations of claim 21 and are allowable.

Claims 7, 8, 11, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by *Nagai* (US 6160349). The Applicant respectfully disagrees as the *Nagai* does not teach all the recitations of any of claim 7, 8, 11 and 32.

Claim 7 recites in part: "a driving circuit which (a) applies a write pulse to selected discharge cells of the plurality of discharge cells to write the image, and (b) successively applies a plurality of sustain pulses which alternate in polarity, to each of the plurality of discharge cells to perform a sustain discharge in the selected discharge cells, wherein immediately before a leading edge of at least a sustain pulse of the plurality of sustain pulses which is first applied to the discharge cell, the driving circuit applies a pulse that is opposite in polarity to the sustain pulse, to the discharge cell for a predetermined period." [Emphasis added.]

It is important to note: (a) that the claim recites pulses applied to discharge cells, not electrodes, and one must view the sum of the voltages of the individual electrodes when considering whether a driving circuit is applying the claimed pulses to discharge cells; (b) that the opposite polarity pulse is applied immediately before the leading edge of the first sustain pulse; and (c)

that in addition to the opposite polarity pulse and the sustain pulses, a write pulse is applied. In regard to (b), as can be seen in figure 15, the opposite polarity pulse ($-V_1$) is immediately before the first sustain pulse (V_2) in that the trailing edge of the opposite polarity pulse ($-V_1$) coincides with the leading edge of the first sustain pulse (V_2).

The Office Action asserts that a scanning pulse of *Nagai* satisfies the claimed opposite polarity pulse. However, as can be seen in figures 14A and 15, the scanning pulses of *Nagai* do not occur "immediately before" the leading edge of a sustain pulse. Instead, there is a delay period between the last scan pulse and the initial sustain pulse. As such, claim 7 is not anticipated by *Nagai*, nor are claim 8 and 11 at least because they depend on claim 7.

Claim 32 recites in part: "a writing step for applying a write pulse to selected discharge cells of the plurality of discharge cells to write the image; and a discharge sustaining step for successively applying a plurality of sustain pulses which alternate in polarity, to each of the plurality of discharge cells to perform a sustain discharge in the selected discharge cells, wherein in the discharge sustaining step, immediately before a leading edge of at least a sustain pulse of the plurality of sustain pulses which is first applied to the discharge cell, a pulse that is opposite in polarity to the sustain pulse is applied to the discharge cell for a predetermined period." As can be seen, the recitations of claim 32 are similar to those of claim 7, and *Nagai* fails to anticipate claim 32 for the same reason that it fails to anticipate claim 7, i.e. the scan pulses pointed to by the Office Action do not occur immediately before a leading edge of at least a sustain pulse. Moreover, the scan pulses of *Nagai* do not occur "in the discharge sustaining step" as claimed in claim 32 so *Nagai* fails to anticipate claim 32 for this reason as well.

It should also be noted that the Office Action asserts that the priming pulse of *Nagai* constitutes a "write pulse" as claimed. However, the term "write pulse" is defined in paragraph [0105] of the present application as the scan and data pulses, i.e. the pulses that are applied to the discharge cells as the scan and data pulses are applied to the electrodes. The priming pulse of *Nagai* precedes the address and scanning pulses of *Nagai* (which correspond to the scan and data pulses of the present application). As such, the priming pulse of *Nagai* is not a write pulse as claimed. Moreover, the claimed write pulse is applied to selected cells, but the priming pulse of *Nagai* is

applied to a common electrode.

Claims 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 27, 28, and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Nagai* in view of *Makino* (US 6426732). In response, claims 15 and 16 have been cancelled. Claims 19, 27, and 33 have been amended to include a recitation previously found in allowable claim 21, namely "a time during which the absolute value of the voltage of the sustain pulse exceeds the absolute value of the discharge firing voltage is no more than 100ns." Claims 20 and 22 depend on amended claim 19, and claim 28 on amended claim 27. Applicant respectfully submits that the remaining claims, as amended herein, are patentable over the cited references as they now include the recitations of allowable claim 21.

It is believed that the case is now in condition for allowance, and an early notification of the same is requested. If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview will help further the prosecution of this case, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the listed telephone number.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on November 29, 2004.

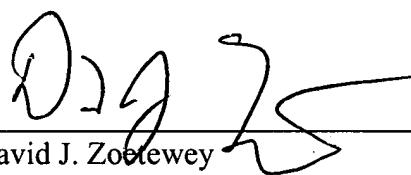
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Signature

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Very truly yours,

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